

# High School English Review Booklet

## Spring 2009

Instructions to the Students: The following activities are designed to provide practice for students as they prepare for their final exams, especially those taking the English Regents. You will have opportunities to strengthen your academic and literary vocabulary and enhance your critical reading and writing skills by working through the 5 days of activities and links included in this booklet. Many of the sample activities are taken directly from previous Regents exams. The first three days are different for students in grades 9-11 and students in grade 12. The last two days are the same for all students.

## Day One: Grades 9-11

(3 lessons on this task)

**Regents Prep:** Reading and Writing for information and understanding

### *Overview of Session One, Part B of the English Regents Exam.*

Session One, Part B of the English Regents Exam assesses your skills in reading and writing for information and understanding. In this part of the exam, you will read an informational article accompanied by a chart or some other graphic presentation, answer ten multiple-choice questions and write an informational or persuasive piece expressing a point of view and recommendation based on the text.

Objective: Understanding the purpose of different informational texts

**Informational texts** are based on facts and there are many different types. Each type has a specific purpose or reason for being. It is important as a reader to know the purpose of each of the different types of texts.

Try to figure out the purpose for these types of informational texts.

1. Persuasive Essay/ Newspaper Editorial

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Scientific Article:

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Historical Article

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Biography

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Procedural or Instructional Text

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Advertisements and Brochures

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

Once you are able to identify the purpose of each of the texts, find an informational text that you are interested in and read it.

After you read the text identify five elements that are related to the purpose of that specific type of informational text.

Reflection:

Did knowing about the writing help you understand the text? Explain in about a paragraph.

What type of informational text do you find most challenging?  
Why? Explain.

## **Day Two: Grades 9-11**

**Regents Prep:** Reading and Writing for information and understanding

Go to the New York State Department of Education website to review previous Regents exams:  
<http://www.nysedregents.org/testing/engre/regenteng.html>

Find the last English Regents from January 2009 and go to Session 1, Part B on page 5.

Steps to approach the task:

- Look at the text and identify the type of informational text. This will help you determine the purpose of the text.
- Read the task and then read the subheadings of the text to determine the organization of the text.
- Read the text and circle or underline the main idea in each paragraph.
- After the first reading look over and read the multiple choice questions and try and answer the ones you know and identify the questions you are unsure of or don't know the answer to.
- Read the text the second time to reach a deeper understanding and figure out the answers for the multiple choice questions.
- Go back and read the task. What is required in your essay? You have been asked to write a persuasive letter .

Steps to consider as you approach the persuasive letter (the task asks for the body of the letter – this is an essay!)

- You will need a clear thesis statement.
- Read the rest of the text to see how you are going to persuade or convince your reader about:

Your Task: Using relevant information from the text and the table in Session 1, Part B, write a letter to the director of the local agency in which you persuade the agency to consider straw bales as a future construction material.

- List three reasons why straw bales should be used in construction. Make sure one of the reasons is from the Table: Life-Cycle Costs of a House..
- Create an outline to organize your essay and then write your essay.

### **Day 3: Grades 9-11**

#### **Regents Prep:** Grading your essay and revising

After you complete your essay, grade your essay based on the rubric provided on the website and look at some sample student essays that got high grades (5 or 6).

Reflection:

What grade did you give your essay?

How does your essay compare to the sample high scoring essays?

What could you do to improve your essay? List three areas on the rubric.

What did you learn about yourself from this activity as reader and writer? How will you work on improving reading and writing skills?

Activity: After you identify the areas in your essay select two areas/sections that need improvement and try to revise by adding more details or clarifying etc. (depending on what is needed).

Use the high scoring sample essays as your guide.

After you make the changes to your essay, read your essay aloud and grade it again against the rubric.

### **Day 1: Grade 12**

#### Beginning of Biography Essay

What is the importance of a name?

Objective:

- Identify elements of characterization by using personal student writing
- Make interpersonal connection with literature
- Beginning activity of biographical college essay

Read: The chapter titled “My Name” from *House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros, which you can find at:

<http://my.uen.org/mydocuments/downloadfile?userid=deneetyler&documentid=4084125>

Complete the table below on” What is the importance of a name?” This should provide suggestions for discussion and writing.

<b>What is the importance of a name?</b>
1. What is your full legal name?
2. What is the origin or meaning of your name?
3. How and why did your parents select this name for you?
4. What if any nicknames have you had and how did they come about?
5. Has your name influenced your life in any manner? Explain
6. Is there a name you like better? What is it and why?
7. Is there any family history behind your name? If so, explain.

Procedure: After you finish the handout, review your answers and compile them into a few paragraphs that relate a story about your name.

Extension: After you finish, try to share your personal writing with some family members and ask them to provide input or comments. You may find more or different stories that you had not heard before.

You could also expand the story to include another family member, for example, your mother, father or sibling.

## **Days Two and Three: Grade 12**

Analyze advertising methods and practice rhetorical approaches in persuasive writing.

Project: Creating an advertisement campaign using rhetorical appeals

Preparation: Review of the four rhetorical appeals: Logos, Pathos, Ethos and Mythos

Brief explanation:

Rhetoric (n) - the art of speaking or writing effectively. (Webster's Definition)

According to Aristotle, rhetoric is "the ability, in each particular case, to see the available means of persuasion." He described three main forms of rhetoric: Ethos, Logos, and Pathos.

Ethos: Ethos is appeal based on the character of the speaker. An ethos-driven document relies on the reputation of the author.

Logos: Logos is appeal based on logic or reason. Documents distributed by companies or corporations are logos-driven. Scholarly documents are also often logos-driven.

Pathos: Pathos is appeal based on emotion. Advertisements tend to be pathos-driven.

*You could also consider a fourth element sometimes added to the Rhetorical Triangle:*

Mythos: Mythos is an appeal to tradition.

Is the author trying to convince you that "that's just the way we do it"? That violating tradition with new thinking or any departure in behavior is just not appropriate. Is that an effective strategy?

Rhetorical appeals can be achieved through writing and:

Visual Information Structure; this includes how the text looks on the screen. This is achieved through the appearance of such things as the titles and the headings.

Color; this includes the color of the text, the background, and the graphics. The contrast of the colors of each of these items is also important.

Graphic Images; this includes the other information in the document aside from the text. This is achieved through such things as icons, buttons, and photos.

### Advertising Assignment

Your task: Company A (identified by you) has hired you as a marketing consultant. You are to review existing brands and advertising techniques in the product field and create a new marketing campaign. Here are some examples of product fields but you can come up with your own.

- Entertainment: movies, TV shows or video games
- Automotive: cars, trucks etc...
- Food and Beverage: package foods, restaurants and grocery
- weight-loss and exercise products and programs
- Beauty Products: hair, skin etc...
- Political Candidates
- Credit Cards, Banking and Financial Services
- Pharmaceuticals: medicines etc.

#### **Part One:** Report and analysis of product field

You can select to market an existing product or create an entirely new company. After you determine the product you will be marketing, perform a brief survey of the current array of choices the consumer has in that field. You will need to identify the basic differences among the brands.

#### **Part Two:** Review the advertising campaigns

Perform a detailed analysis of three brands' advertising methods and campaigns. In your analysis, comment on how both verbal and visual techniques use the four rhetorical appeals. (See above for definition and explanation.)

Look at the demographic profile of the audience being targeted (race, age, gender, urban/suburban, geographic region etc.)

Discuss the tone each company takes towards its audience and its competitors. You may also want to ask friends and relatives who fall under the targeted demographic how they view the brand.

#### **Part Three:** Design a new campaign

As you complete analyzing your company's competitors, and market and design a comprehensive advertising campaign for your company's product. You should keep the following in mind:

- What type of media will be used. Also consider venues.

- Think of the advertisement details, i.e., visual and verbal details create two examples.
- Write down the rhetorical appeals you have used in the advertising and how that will appeal to your targeted demographic and improve sales.

---

## Day 4: Grades 9-12

### Academic Vocabulary

#### Words for the Wise

The words listed below are commonly used in the directions for exams and assignments and often times they are hard to understand. Your task is to find the definitions of the words and write them in terms that you can understand. Look at the example for the word “analyze” and complete the rest of the words.

Analyze	<i>What are the details?</i> Write obvious and hidden meanings of the text and explain how each part helps or fits into the larger text.
---------	--

Argue

Compare

Contrast

Define

Demonstrate

Describe

Discuss

Explain

Identify

Interpret



List

Outline

Plot

Summarize

After you complete the definitions, keep them and use them as a resource during class. As you get comfortable with each of the words and their meanings, you will not need your list because you will have learned them!

## **Day 5: Grades 9-12**

Literary Elements: Tone and Mood

Objective: Understanding how to identify mood and tone in literary works

Focus: Regents review, literary response and SAT prep, critical reading

What is tone and mood?

Tone: is the attitude of the speaker toward the reader or listener and toward a subject.

Mood: the mood about a piece of writing is also connected to tone; however it refers to the general feeling created by the piece of writing.

Below is a list of words describing tone and mood. It is an additional tier of vocabulary to challenge you as you read literary passages. This list will help you develop a more diverse vocabulary about tone and mood.

### **Tone vocabulary**

Aloof- detached, distant

Apologetic- sorry, admitting fault

Assertive- strong statement

Cautious- hesitant

Confrontational-argumentative

Cynical- seeing the worst in people, taking a negative outlook on things or subject

Defensive- protective of viewpoint  
Emphatic- stressing one's viewpoint  
Empathetic- having feelings for others  
Inquisitive- asking questions  
Nostalgic- remembering or yearning for the past  
Sardonic- sarcastic  
Scathing – harsh, judgmental, normally negative  
Scholarly- intellectual  
Skeptical- doubtful  
Tentative- hesitant  
Understated- mildly suggested

### **Mood Vocabulary**

Amusement- humor  
Bemusement- puzzlement  
Detachment-lack of concern  
Disdain- scorn  
Indignation- anger  
Irony- incongruity  
Mockery- insincere imitation  
Objective- factual  
Optimism- positive  
Pessimism- negative  
Smugness- self-satisfaction

Activity: go to the Regents website and select Day 2 of the ELA Regents Part A – Reading and Writing for Literary Response

The task will have literary passages and a poem. You can read the passages and practice your new tone and mood vocabulary.

## Website Links for the English Language Arts Regents Exam

Go to the following websites to for additional review and practice:

1. New York State Department of Education- exam archive:  
<http://www.nysedregents.org/testing/engre/regenteng.html>
2. Oswego School District Regents Prep Center: <http://www.regentsprep.org/>
3. New York State High School Regents Exam Prep Center- English  
<http://www.regentsprep.org/Regents/english/english.cfm>
4. Regents Review Live 2009! <http://www.regentsreviewlive.net/>
5. Barron's Regents- Exam Preparation: <http://www.barronsregents.com/english-regents.html>